ever takes the front as a sample. However limited we are in respect of cost, it would be best spread all over it, and not confined to the embellishment of a part at the expense of the rest.

But this superficiality of character pervades, in a greater or less degree, almost the whole of our practice:—porticoes are too often a mere surface decoration, too shallow to be either useful or effective in appearance. (In respect to utility, closed porches would be most suitable to this climate). In the large and important portico of the Revenue Building, Liverpool, a feature twice repeated, utility is entirely overlooked, when, if it had been attended to, greater power and beauty would have resulted. Owing to their smallness of projection, in proportion to their height, they are, as to the genuine purpose of porticoes, viz., shelter from sun and rain, perfectly useless. Beauty and utility generally go hand in hand, and are sacrificed together, and this is an instance of the latter result; for had these porticoes, instead of one, been two or more intercolumniations wide, they would not only have afforded protection from the weather, but have produced infinitely greater effect of light and shade. Convenience should go first, and let ornament follow to decorate her requirement: much beauty, however, arises spontaneously under her feet. Compare these with the portico of the Pantheon at Rome, which, while it is a genuine portico, is also eminently effective pictorially.

There is another respectable building in Liverpool, where an error has been committed of a graver nature than the one just alluded to. A large and expensive portico graces its front, but the objection to the Custom-house porticoes, of not sheltering their doorways, cannot be urged against this, for it has no doorway to shelter. Its office is a complete sinecure: an entrance door is placed on each side of it, in its near neighbourhood, but unprotected by its embrace, either from the pelting storm or scorching sun!

The fault of many of our villas and town houses, and which is akin to those I have enumerated, is, that what is properly called the architecture is put in a single patch, at the expense of the rest, which is utterly destitute of character: it is not carried out to the production of anything like unity or harmony, something of which might be obtained with comparatively little additional expense, as in many of them but slight indication of style is absolutely required beyond the principal feature of porch or portico. In the latter we frequently recognize a Grecian doric, or other classic gem of the first water, while no trace either of Greece or Rome is discernable elsewhere. We have doors pilastered and pillared, while windows are entirely neglected; the former, perhaps, rejoicing in all the graces of the Parthenon, while the latter are merely glazed holes.

This sharp abrupt cutting of the aperture of windows, as well as their straight outline, is unnatural, and is one of the chief causes of a want of feeling, a coldness and harshness, observable in too many town and suburban houses of the present day. Whilst, in the Pointed style, this preparation or gradation is made in the humblest erection, by the beveled or chamfered reveals, in the classic styles it is frequently neglected in the most important buildings. But no public building or dwelling-house pretending to architectural character or style should have its windows without architraves of some kind, as a transition from the pier to the aperture. In brick houses the want of this is less felt, as the frequency of the joints, in some measure, relieves the reveals. Provision for depth of shadow is still oftener neglected, and, without depth, we cannot communicate to the whole composition the grand quality called *breadth*. If we have shallow cuttings only, the shadows will be all in patches, or spots. Projections and recesses should, if possible, be of various depths and sizes; but invariably there should be one broad and deep shadow provided for, to unite the others, which will become secondary to it. This will be obtained by the portico, porch, or deep door recess. We want deep recesses for shadow, and great masses for light; but if we attend to the shadows, nature will take care of the lights. In a perfect picture there must be a complete gradation: no two shadows or lights must be equal, but must differ either in size or intensity; and, under a favourable solar and atmospheric effect, assisted by the accidental shadows of clouds, this will be the case in a well designed building. It will have all the qualities of a good picture.

This is a subject well worthy the study of the architect, who should know as much of the nature of chiaroscuro as the painter. There are points to which much importance is attached by the latter, which are comparatively unheeded by the architect, though of equal consequence in a building: the principle of concentration, for instance, on which great stress is justly laid in painting, has perhaps never been sufficiently carried out in architecture. The fundamental principles of composition are common to the plastic arts, which, though different in their technicalities and modes of expression, are one in their origin and their end, and, governed by the same principles of taste, the same laws of grace and beauty, and consequently, requiring similar faculties of mind in their professors, will be found to illustrate each other.

I have witnessed in one or two public buildings evidence of an undue ambition, on the part of the architect, for a long perspective of windows on the sides, which has operated to the production of a narrowness beneath the dignity of the building, and greatly interfered with that breadth of effect for which I have been contending. The object is a desirable one; but it must not be obtained at such a sacrifice, by so cutting up the walls as to reduce the windows to mere slits, and the solids to mere props. In buildings so treated, there can be no repose of light, for which broad masses, not mere slips of masonry, must be provided.

The more frequent use of curves in windows, doors, and their details, would do much to remove the coldness and harshness to which allusion has been made, and give a more artistic character to our fronts. Circles, ellipses, and other curves, are not made sufficient use of at present, either in the forms of construction or decoration: many forms might be used which are at present excluded under false impressions as to purity of style: the rose window, for instance, need not be confined to the Gothic styles,—modified as respects its details, divested of its Gothic character, it might shed its bloom upon the Anglo-classic building also. Polygonal and other regular figures, the circle inscribed in the square, and other combinations of geometrical forms not much used at present, would, variously applied, be fertile in beauty.

Another defect in our architecture, to which I beg to call attention, is the inadaptation of art to nature. A great deal might be written on the suiting of country houses to their situation. The situations or sites of such houses are very unlike—nothing can be more so—and therefore a wide field for variety in the character of villa architecture arises at once. Let us suppose a gentleman's seat to be required on the banks of the Thames, in Surrey or Berkshire; another in the gorge of Borrowdale; and another on the margin of Culloden. Now, though these three villas might be required of precisely the same internal capacity, and for inmates of similar station and habits, yet the judicious architect would have their form and composition of a totally different character. In a mountainous district, as we cannot compete with nature on her own ground, reason, I think, would dictate, as a means of obtaining effect, the expansion of the composition horizontally, but point out the folly at once of attempting to produce it by height; besides, shelter and comfort is here naturally sought, and exposure unpleasant. On the wooded gently undulating banks of a river, height might be resorted to for this purpose, as there would, in such situations, be only trees to rival, unless it were required to have the house at the foot of a slope, crowned with wood, and then it would have a more domestic and comfortable look if kept down,—while, on a plain, uninterrupted either by wood or undulation, both height and horizontal extent might be resorted to with success; that is to say, one part might rise, in the nature of a tower, above the adjoining part, which adjoining part would also be made effective by extension horizontally. The most powerful object on a plain, as the ancient Egyptians well knew, is a pyramid, as it involves both height and width, and gives the greatest possible expanse in each direction, with a given quantity of materials; and this would suggest a pyramidal composition for a similar situation.

Wordsworth and others have complained of the beauty of the lake district being marred, and many fine prospects even destroyed, by the "flaring gentlemen's houses" within the last thirty years erected, to the disturbance of that peaceful harmony of form and colour which had hitherto been preserved. This arises, I conceive, entirely from inadaptation: on the embellishment of many of them no expense was spared; they were built by persons ambitious of producing something fine, and who believed every addition they made to be an improvement to the scenery. Had they hearkened to the whisper of nature, and built of such form as the site seemed to allow them, —nay, to invite them—to take, instead of being eyesores, they would have added a charm to the landscape, which architecture judiciously applied, tastefully fitted, as it were, into the beautiful bosom of nature, must ever give to her scenery, and which the poet, I am sure, would have felt and appreciated.

But the English lake district is not the only locality so disfigured. The romantic and diversified scenery of the Clyde has suffered from the same cause. To a person sailing up that river, the villas on its banks appear so entirely cut out from the ground, as to be complete blots on the landscape, and did not experience too soon suggest the truth, might be taken for aerolites dropped from the clouds, or shot from the moon. Abortions of art and unadopted of nature, they have no relation to anything about them, and though in reality large houses, yet, being seen with mountains for their background, and nothing else with which they can be compared, they look like so many dove-cotes, or fly-boxes. But the great fault, and the one which leads to this comparison, is their want of harmony with the surrounding scenery, and of union with the ground, from which they rise abruptly, without the least preparation. No intermediate link is used between the everlasting hill and the house of yesterday,—no blending of the one into the other; the tables of nature's law lay under their feet; she had given them examples in trees and hillocks, and every surrounding object, and yet not the least hint was taken by their builders.

Now, this is a fault that might be easily avoided. There are three means by which union between the house and the ground is obtained, viz., form, texture, and colour. The two first are exemplified in the untooled, boldly projecting plinth and continued stylobate, which we sometimes, but too seldom, see,—in the rustic basement, the terraces of the Italian villas and Elizabethan houses (which, by the way, possess great capabilities for picturesque effect),—in any arrangement, in short, that widens the base, and imitates the rough texture of the ground. As to the first, viz., form, it was the principle recognized by the Greeks in their invention of the column, the shaft of which did not rise out of the ground without the intervention of the base, which again was received by the sub-plinth and pedestal. The Grecian Doric, though a seeming exception, acknowledges it, by its sudden diminution: it was also strikingly recognised in the steps which surrounded their temples. The basement of untooled stone forms a good bond of union between art and nature. Nothing is more ridiculous than to place carved ornaments, or highly finished masonry, on the ground-story of a building, within reach of injury by violence or accident. It is worse than waste of expense, for rude texture below heightens the effect of delicacy and finish above. The few country houses I have seen, in which this principle is observed, are really charming objects: one is reminded by such buildings of some rich natural production: at a distance they look like gems sparkling in the sun, polished only on their upper sides. As to the third mean, viz., colour, that is as important as the others, and as often neglected: the rule, as a general guide, suggested by Sir Joshua Reynolds, that the colour of the house should have a shade of the colour of the soil, is a good one; but two colours of stone, or brick with stone dressings,

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